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Christianity cannot more than the Greek ethics be the standard for the view and principle of life during all times. But we can take from the New Testament as from all other productions of the mind what can be used in our spiritual housekeeping. There are here many important elements which every system of ethics can and must receive.

Höffding's book is very profound and displays the learning and intellectual acuteness of the author. He is doubtless sincere in his belief, though Christian theism cannot accept his religious speculations. They will perhaps do good in stimulating thought on the important topics with which the work deals. His exegetical conception of Scripture is often misleading, but he always seems to be confident as to the correctness of his interpretation.

HENRIK GUNDERSEN.

MORGAN PARK, ILL.

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A SKETCH OF SEMITIC ORIGINS, SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS. By GEORGE AARON BARTON. New York: Macmillan, 1902. Pp. xiii + 342. \$3, net.

THE evolution of Semitic religious and social life is a theme of vast dimensions. Many of the intricate questions involved in its discussion cannot as yet be answered out of the fragmentary materials which have been discovered touching the earliest periods of Semitic life.

Professor Barton's researches on this question are the outgrowth of a study of Semitic religion extending over several years. He attempts in this series of studies to point out "the trail along which the Semites dragged themselves during those weary centuries when they were working their way from savagery to civilization" (p. vii). It is freely admitted at the outset that there are many places where the trail cannot be found, but its general course is all that we can expect to find through such trackless wastes.

The coherency of the discussion may be judged from the following chapter headings: i, "The Cradle of the Semites;" ii, "Primitive Semitic Social Life;" iii, "Semitic Religious Origins;" iv, "Transformations among the Southern and Western Semites;" v, "Transformations in Babylonia;" vi, "Survivals;" vii, "Yahwe;" viii, "Brief Estimate of Semitic Social and Religious Influence on the Non-Semitic World."

As a result of the gathering up of all the principal views on the origin of the Semites, the author says:

We conclude, then, that we must hold to the Arabic origin of the Semites.

Taking Arabia as the Semitic cradle-land, the course of distribution of the Semitic nations over the lands occupied by them during the historical period would be that described by Schrader and Wright on the basis of the relative divergence of the languages from the primitive type (pp. 28, 29). The Aramaeans were the first to separate from the main body of emigrants; at a considerably later period the Canaanites, and, last of all, the Assyrians (p. 29).

The chapter on "Primitive Semitic Social Life" is almost wholly a sociological study of such problems as those that have been treated by Robertson Smith, Wellhausen, modern travelers in Arabia, and modern sociologists. The author utilizes a wide range of diverse materials. The discussion strikes one as rather loosely articulated, due, however, most probably to the fragmentary character of the sources which he is obliged to use. As a summing up of the chapter he specifies the following points as clear to him :

The Semites, perhaps as early as the time of their separation from the Hamites, had reached the animistic stage of culture, and formed totemistic clans. Their family relations were exceedingly vague. . . . Descent was reckoned through them [the women] . . . . the killing of female infants created a paucity of women, which produced a condition of polyandry . . . . and, later, a system of male kinship. Perhaps at the time of their separation from the Hamites, and at all events comparatively early, they had entered the pastoral and semi-agricultural stage of culture, in which the date-palm played an important part (pp. 79, 80).

In the discussion of the religious origins of the Semites the author follows out the lines of economical and social development laid down in the preceding chapter, and concludes that the earliest deities of the Semites were feminine, and that these were displaced, as was the polyandrous state of society, by male kinship or the patriarchal state. As the matriarchal state of society gave way to the patriarchal, so the primitive mother-goddess largely gave way before the masculine deity. If she was retained at all, it was in the form of a companion of the male deity.

The longest chapter (v) in the book is an elaborate research of "Transformations in Babylonia"—of the whole assemblage of deities of Babylonia and Assyria as found in the wide range of literature now available for the Semitic scholar. The author attempts to prove that the Sumerians were the original inhabitants of Babylonia, but his arguments, from the point of view of a historian, do not carry his case. With careful discrimination he traces the origin and relationships of the Babylonian pantheon down to the close of Semitic sovereignty in

Babylonia and the West—and even beyond. His conclusions regarding their relations are, in most respects, the same as those set forth by Jastrow's *Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*.

"Survivals" (chap. vi) is a tracing of the deities of Arabia, Phoenicia, and other later Semitic peoples back to their originals, either in Arabia or Babylonia. The chapter (vii) on "Yahwe" adopts practically Budde's position regarding his origin and early relations to the Kenites. In accordance with his scheme, Barton here presents arguments to prove that the Yahweh of the Kenites, "like Ramman, Hadad, and most other Semitic deities," was developed by the same processes out of the primitive mother-goddess (p. 280). This point is wrought out with considerable elaboration, but the arguments are not convincing.

The volume is a valuable summary of the material bearing on Semitic origins, though that material is too fragmentary to reach much more than hypothetical conclusions, especially in the earliest periods of Semitic life.

The book is written in a pleasing though rather loose style. The spirit is that of a true scholar searching for the truth in every available source.

The book is well printed, and presents a delightful page. The reader, however, is too often interrupted by typographical errors, which should be corrected in another edition.

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#### DIE RELIGIÖS-POLITISCHEN OPPOSITIONSPARTEIEN IM ALTEN ISLAM.

Von JULIUS WELLHAUSEN. Berlin: Weidmann, 1901. Pp. 99. M. 6.50. [= "Abhandlungen der königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen": Philologisch-historische Klasse, Neue Folge, Band V, Nr. 2.]

THE parties here treated of are the *Hawārij* or Separatists and the *Shiites* or *Alyites*; for the history Wellhausen relies mainly on Abu Miḥnaf, who is Tabari's oldest authority. The first question considered is whether Aš'ath and Abu Musa were traitors, as Weil, Dozy, Brünnow, and Müller hold. At the battle of Siffin, when the Syrians were practically defeated and were saved only by Amr's clever trick of raising Korans on spear-points, Aš'ath went through Ali's army announcing the agreement between him and Moawia to refer their dispute to two arbiters; it is said by late Arabic writers that Aš'ath had an under-